

**EDUCATING HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH**  
**A Process For Use By Iowa School Districts In Meeting the**  
**Requirements of Chapter 33, Educating the Homeless, Iowa**  
**Administrative Code and the Requirements of the McKinney-Vento**  
**Homeless Education Act, Title X, Part C, No Child Left Behind Act**

*The mission of the Office of the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth is to assure quality school programs and services for homeless children and youth through the dissemination of pertinent information and resources for use in identification, assessment, evaluation, and development of programs and services. In keeping with this mission a model process has been prepared for use by Iowa School Districts. **This model process is not required.***

*The process is designed to achieve the following goals:*

- *The location and identification of homeless school age and preschool age children and youth who reside within the school district, including those who are not enrolled in school.*
- *The assessment of educational and personal needs.*
- *The provision of appropriate educational programs and services to homeless children and youth who reside within the school district, as soon as possible and when they are most needed.*
- *The maintenance of a cumulative count of the homeless children and youth who reside within each of the district's schools and within the entire district.*
- *The maintenance of demographic data and information regarding the characteristics of children and youth in homeless situations, and information regarding their family situations.*

***The primary and most important benefit of achieving the goals listed above is the identification and the provision of appropriate and successful educational programs for school age and preschool age children and youth in homeless situations. Other benefits include the following:***

- *The collection of pertinent information regarding homelessness for use by the district's educational planners and community-wide interagency task force committees.*
- *A documentation of the implementation of identification procedures and the provision of programs and services. This documentation will verify the school district's completion of identification and provision of programs and services requirements of Chapter 33, Educating the Homeless, Iowa Administrative Code. The requirements of Chapter 33 are monitored during the Iowa Department of Education's equity and school improvement accreditation visitations.*

- *The data collected will be available for forwarding, when requested, to the Department. The receipt of this data will enable the Department to complete a statewide count and a demographic profile of children and youth in Iowa who are in homeless situations. This statewide summary will ensure that Iowa receives all of the federal homeless assistance funds for which it is eligible. It will be used by educational and community planners both locally and statewide to improve programs and services, seek financial assistance, and seek needed changes in Iowa laws, rules, and regulations.*

## **PART I PROGRAM PLANNING AND COORDINATION WITH COMMUNITY PROVIDERS\**

### **Requirements**

- ◆ Examine and revise, if necessary, existing school policies or rules that create barriers to the enrollment of homeless children and youth.
- ◆ Adopt procedures and practices that meet the requirements of Chapter 33 and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 2001.
- ◆ Coordinate with local service agencies providing programs and services to homeless children and youth.

### **Materials**

This process utilizes a guide that has been prepared for use by school district personnel in the development of programs and services for homeless children and youth. The guide, Homelessness: Local Program Planning Review Guides: Services For Homeless Children and Youth, addresses the requirements of Chapter 33, Educating the Homeless, Iowa Administrative Code and the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 2001, Title X, Part C of the No Child Left Behind Act. *An electronic copy has been emailed to the School District Liaison's for Homeless Children and Youth.* Contact Ray Morley, 515-281-3966 or [ray.morley@ed.state.ia.us](mailto:ray.morley@ed.state.ia.us) to obtain an electronic copy.

The program review guide, that includes the McKinney-Vento Act, is available from the following web site:

<http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/is/homeless/ppsd.html>

### **Procedure**

1. Identify school activities, services, and programs that are either (1) not completed or not provided and/or are (2) partially completed or partially provided by responding to the items in the "Comprehensive Local Education Agency Program Review Guide Regarding Homelessness, *Identification, Enrollment, Attendance, and Success of Homeless Children and Youth.*" Enter the activities, services, and programs that are not completed/provided or are partially completed/provided on the form Goals for Local Planning.

2. Identify where shortages of services for homeless children/youth exist by having significant school district staff and community providers complete both the “Basic School Service/Activity Checklist for Homeless” and the “Basic Community Service/Activity Checklist for Homeless” of the Local Program Planning and Review Guide. Completing the checklist as a group may yield the best results in identifying where shortages of services exist. Enter the goals for local planning in both checklists.
3. **Develop and implement a plan to accomplish the goals identified in steps 1 and 2.**

## **PART II**

### **IDENTIFYING CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN HOMELESS SITUATIONS AND ASSESSING THEIR EDUCATIONAL AND PERSONAL NEEDS**

#### **Requirements**

- ◆ Chapter 33 includes the requirement to “locate and identify homeless children or youth.” The McKinney-Vento Act, Title X, Part C, No Child Left Behind, includes “LEA liaisons must ensure that Homeless children and youth are identified by school personnel through practices adopted by the district and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies.” Identification of preschool age children is needed because of their eligibility to enroll in public preschools and Title I programs.
- ◆ Disseminate public notices of educational rights of homeless children and youths of school age and post information encouraging their enrollment in the public school. (See McKinney-Vento Act, Title X, Part C and Chapter 33, Iowa Administrative Code. Located in the Appendices of Homelessness: Local Program Planning Review Guide at <http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/is/homeless/ppsd.html>).
- ◆ In determining school placement of a homeless student, the child’s best interest must be considered (See McKinney-Vento Act, Title X, Part C and Chapter 33, Iowa Administrative Code).

#### **Materials**

- ◆ A power point presentation on the new legislation on Homelessness: Title X of the No Child Left Behind Act.  
<http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/is/mvhea/index.html>  
**NOTE:** For general audiences you may want to omit the slides pertaining to LEA Sub-Grant Applications-Need and LEA Sub-Grant Applications-Use of Funds.
- ◆ A power point presentation entitled Homeless Students: Definitions, Rights, and Identification.  
<http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/is/homeless/identify.ppt>
- ◆ To help with personalized planning the Identification and Needs Assessment Form: Children and Youth in Homeless Situations can be completed for each child/youth identified as being in a homeless situation. The form can be located at  
<http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/is/homeless/ppsd.html>

## **Identification and Needs Assessment Procedures**

The identification and needs assessment procedures listed below are recommended for completion by the school district's liaison for homeless education as approved by the Superintendent and the Board of Education:

1. Review the "process" presented in this document and the materials suggested for use in implementing the process.
2. Select personnel to receive staff development training and schedule staff development meetings. It is suggested that two power point presentations listed under Materials above be shown to the entire staff. Secretaries, bus drivers, associates, and food service personnel, in addition to the teaching and support staff, have opportunities to detect signs that indicate homelessness.
3. If needed, select personnel in addition to the liaison to present the power point presentations. This may be needed in larger districts.
4. Present the power point presentations.
5. Determine the personnel in each building within the school district and within each preschool program provided by the school district that will complete Section One of the Identification and Needs Assessment Form. Persons completing the format should be trained to obtain as much information as possible when the homeless child or youth is identified.
6. Schedule and conduct training sessions regarding the completion of Section One.
7. Determine the personnel who will complete Section Two of the Identification and Needs Assessment Form. It is suggested that support staff such as social workers, counselors or home school/program liaisons complete Section Two.
8. Schedule and conduct training sessions regarding the completion of Section Two. Make sure items on Section One are also understood. The persons completing Section Two should also obtain information as needed to complete Section I.
9. Determine the personnel who will collect and **save** the Identification and Needs Assessment Form. information. School districts may wish to analyze the data as it pertains to each building and to all buildings combined.
10. Community interagency task forces or similar committees may wish to combine the information obtained from the Identification and Needs Assessment Forms (Refer to Part I of this document) into a community wide report.
11. The completed Identification and Needs Assessment Form will provide information needed for school improvement reviews and for statewide studies of Iowa's Homeless Population. Information on previous and current studies can be obtained by contacting the Office of Homeless Education, Bureau of Instructional Services, Iowa Department of Education, (515) 281-3911.
- 12. Save copies of the completed forms.**

## **PART III PROVISION OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

### **Requirements**

- ◆ According to a child or youth's best interest, continue the child/youth's education in the school of origin, or enroll the child/youth in any public school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area where the child/youth is actually living are eligible to attend.
- ◆ Homeless children and youth must receive comparable services to those received by all other children including transportation services, educational services, and meals through school nutrition programs.
- ◆ Immediately enroll children and youth experiencing homelessness, even if no records are currently available.
- ◆ Fully inform parents and guardians of enrollment options and educational opportunities available.
- ◆ Provide written explanations to parents regarding disputes over school selection and enrollment.
- ◆ Provide parents and guardians with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of the children.
- ◆ Fully inform unaccompanied youth of their enrollment options and available educational opportunities.
- ◆ Assist unaccompanied youth in school enrollment and selection decisions and transportation needs.
- ◆ Adopt policies and practices to ensure that children and youth are not stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless.
- ◆ Adopt policies and practices to ensure transportation is provided, at request of parent or guardian or LEA liaison on behalf of unaccompanied youth, to and from the school of origin.
- ◆ Provide transportation services that are comparable to those received by other students in the school selected.
- ◆ Provide Title I service to children and youth that live in homeless situations. They are automatically eligible to receive Title I service. Reserve Title I funds to provide comparable services for eligible homeless children who do not attend participating schools, including providing educationally related support services to children in shelters and other locations where children may live.

## **Helpful Materials**

- ◆ A power point presentation entitled *Homeless Students: Meeting Their Needs*.  
[http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/is/homeless/power\\_point.html](http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/is/homeless/power_point.html)
- ◆ A summary of the results of the completion of the "Basic School Service/Activity Checklist" and the "Basic Community Service/Activity Checklist".  
<http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/is/homeless/ppsd.html>
- ◆ The report of activities, services, and programs that are not completed/provided or are partially completed/provided resulting from the responses to the items on the "Comprehensive Local Education Agency Program Review Guide Regarding Homelessness, Identification, Enrollment, Attendance, and Success of Homeless Children and Youth."  
<http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/is/homeless/ppsd.html>
- ◆ A power point presentation on the new legislation on Homelessness; Title X of the No Child Left Behind Act.

<http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/is/mvhea/index.html>

**NOTE:** For general audiences omit the slides pertaining to LEA Sub-Grant Applications-Need and LEA Sub-Grant Applications-Use of Funds.

- ◆ The completed Identification and Needs Assessment Form for each child/youth that is identified as being in a homeless situation.

<http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/is/homeless/ppsd.html>

## **Procedure**

The procedures listed below for the provision of programs and services are recommended for completion by the school district's liaison for homeless education as approved by the Superintendent and the Board of Education:

1. Review the "process" presented in this document and the materials suggested for use in implementing the process.
2. Select personnel to receive staff development training and schedule staff development meetings. It is suggested that the power point presentations regarding *Homeless Students: Meeting the Needs* be shown to the entire staff. It may be helpful to review all or part of the power point presentation explaining the Title X of the No Child Left Behind Act. Secretaries, bus drivers, associates, and food service personnel, in addition to the teaching and support staff, have opportunities to help meet the needs of homeless children and youth.
3. If needed, select personnel in addition to the liaison to show the power point presentations. This may be needed in larger districts.
4. Present the power point presentations.
5. As homeless children/youth are identified review the completed Identification and Needs Assessment Forms and determine school and community programs and services that are needed to meet the educational and personal needs of the homeless children/youth.
6. Implement the needed school programs and services.
7. Inform local service agencies of (1) school programs and services available to meet the educational needs of the homeless child/youth and (2) community programs and services needed to meet the personal needs of the homeless child/youth.

## **PART IV MAINTENANCE AND DISSEMINATION OF RECORDS**

### **Requirements**

- ◆ Contact child's or youth's school last attended for academic and other records.
- ◆ Refer to LEA liaison if immunization or medical records are unavailable.

- ◆ Keep and maintain any record ordinarily kept by the school, including immunization or medical records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records, and evaluations for special services or programs.
- ◆ Have records available, in a timely fashion, when a child or youth enters a new school or school district.
- ◆ Maintain a cumulative count of the homeless children and youth that reside within each of the district's schools and within the entire district.
- ◆ Maintain the individual Identification and Need Assessment forms that were completed for homeless children and youth. This provides demographic data and information regarding the characteristics of children and youth in homeless situations, and information regarding their family situations.
- ◆ Forward, upon request, the cumulative count of homeless children and youth and the individual Identification and Needs Assessment information to the State Coordinator for Homeless Education.

### **Helpful Materials/Resources to be Developed Locally**

- ◆ A cumulative record file for each identified homeless child/youth.
- ◆ A file, preferably electronic, for maintaining the individual Identification and Need Assessment forms that were completed for homeless children/youth.
- ◆ A program for (1) maintaining a cumulative count of the homeless children/youth that reside within each of the district's schools and within the entire district and (2) summarizing the demographic data and information regarding the characteristics of children and youth in homeless situations, and information regarding their family situations.

### **Procedures**

1. Review the requirements listed above and assign personnel to complete the activities needed to meet these requirements.
2. Maintain the records needed to meet the requirements.

If questions arise please send an email message to [ray.morley@ed.state.ia.us](mailto:ray.morley@ed.state.ia.us) or call 515-281-3966.